

2004 Annual Summary

Plan It

Build It

Use It

Maintain It

Manage It

improved safety

Moving Forward

system preservation

reliable mobility

economic vitality
project delivery

2004 Annual Summary

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Employee Spotlight

More than 14,000 TxDOT employees live, work and volunteer in 300 Texas towns, large and small. Our employees are involved in every aspect of community life: they are scout leaders, coaches, community leaders, blood donors, volunteer firefighters, teachers, foster parents. Our employees help build the state's transportation network. And in their off hours, they are out there building good relationships and stronger communities, one person at a time.

Throughout this annual summary, we are featuring just some of them. We are proud of these TxDOT employees and the others within our department with hearts just as generous and stories quite similar.



Dear Fellow Texans:

For all practical purposes, a new Texas Department of Transportation emerged in 2004 as TxDOT began spreading the word about how things must change — indeed, how they are already being transformed — to meet the growing transportation needs of a robust state. In 2004, two circumstances drove the urgency behind our need for alternatives to business as usual: The costs to maintain our aging roads and bridges soared while our need for new capacity exploded.

Since 1980, the state's population has grown 57 percent, the number of registered vehicles has increased 61 percent, the miles driven on Texas roads have jumped 103 percent, and, yet, our total road capacity for that same period increased by nearly 8 percent.

The question facing all of us today is how to pay for new roads and transportation alternatives while keeping our aging roads in top condition and as safe as possible.

Those engaged in the discussion over how to approach this pivotal crossroads have heard the words “tolls,” “regional mobility authority,” and “Trans-Texas Corridor” frequently as the collective dialogue about our state's transportation future continues. The discussion surrounding our progress toward moving forward in transportation has been lively — and a healthy sign of the public's interest in what we do.

We owe it to every Texan to anticipate the transportation needs of our state's residents and to fulfill the intent of legislators who two years ago gave us the tools to deliver transportation more rapidly than ever before to congestion-weary communities.

By working with our partners in government, business and in hundreds of local communities across the state, we will maintain and build a transportation system that connects us to one another, to economic vitality and to the quality of life that we as Texans expect and deserve.

This report highlights TxDOT's accomplishments in 2004 on behalf of the people of Texas.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. W. Behrens".

Michael W. Behrens, P.E.
Executive Director

TxDOT 2004

- ★ Launched a \$600 million program set up through State Highway Fund revenue bonds to **improve safety** on Texas roadways by identifying most crucial needs statewide
- ★ Awarded a record \$4.1 billion in highway **construction contracts** for the second consecutive year, adding congestion-reducing capacity and improved safety to Texas' transportation system
- ★ **Resurfaced** 13 percent of the more than 79,000-mile state highway system, investing in improvements to lengthen the life of Texas roads
- ★ Approved \$9 billion in funds over the next four years to **preserve** the state's existing transportation system and \$21.5 billion to **improve mobility** statewide
- ★ Moved decision-making to the local level through the **Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan**
- ★ Approved three **regional mobility authorities** (RMA) in Gregg/Smith counties, Grayson and Cameron counties, bringing to five the number of areas in Texas empowered to determine their own transportation priorities through RMAs
- ★ Authorized negotiations for the state's first three **pass-through toll** agreements, which give communities tools to accelerate projects, in Montgomery and Grayson counties and the city of Weatherford
- ★ Continued to solicit the public's views on the **Trans-Texas Corridor** in all 254 Texas counties, assuring citizen input on the location of this multi-modal transportation corridor
- ★ Began **environmental studies** on the I-69 and TTC-35 elements of the **Trans-Texas Corridor** and held 70 public meetings to get citizen input
- ★ Selected Cintra-Zachry, an international transportation consortium, to plan, design, build and operate the Oklahoma-Mexico element of the **Trans-Texas Corridor** (TTC-35)
- ★ Continued working with regional transportation planners on development of a **commuter rail** system between Austin and San Antonio
- ★ Authorized the state's second **comprehensive development agreement** for SH 45 SE in Travis County
- ★ Assumed duties of **Medical Transportation Program** from Department of Health and Human Services to reduce overlapping service, cut costs, and increase efficient service to 130,000 clients
- ★ Adopted rules to consider performance when granting **public transportation** contracts to rural and urban transit districts
- ★ Began new **right-of-way** program that pays willing landowners to delay development of any of their land identified as possible future transportation route, saving time and taxpayer money
- ★ Purchased the department's first **toll road**, the Camino Columbia in Laredo, providing critical link to the only international bridge to the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon
- ★ Made **vehicle registration stickers** available for distribution at the point of sale, reducing the risk of sticker fraud, theft
- ★ Installed **wireless Internet** (WiFi) among seven safety rest areas and travel information centers for the traveling public, with plans to offer WiFi at all 102 sites in 2005
- ★ Welcomed two new members to the **transportation commission** as the result of legislation increasing the commission from three to five members

Safety, Quality and Accountability

The highest standards in each of these three principles must work in concert for the Texas Department of Transportation to carry out its assigned responsibilities successfully. The department expects it, and the public deserves it.

Mission

To provide safe, effective and efficient movement of people and goods.

Vision

To be a progressive state transportation agency recognized and respected by the citizens of Texas,

- ★ Providing comfortable, safe, durable, cost-effective, environmentally sensitive and aesthetically appealing transportation systems that work together
- ★ Ensuring a desirable workplace which creates a diverse team of all kinds of people and professions
- ★ Using efficient and cost-effective work methods that encourage innovation and creativity
- ★ Promoting a higher quality of life through partnerships with the citizens of Texas and all branches of government by being receptive, responsible and cooperative.

To help TxDOT focus on the areas of greatest importance and potential benefits to the citizens of Texas, and make it easier for the public and elected officials to evaluate TxDOT's effectiveness, the department has simplified its objectives to five categories:

Objectives:	Goals:
● Reliable mobility	● Ensuring that people and goods move efficiently
● Improved safety	● Reduce roadway fatalities
● System preservation	● Maintain and improve existing roads and bridges
● Accelerated project delivery	● Complete projects faster
● Economic vitality	● Attract and retain businesses and industry

TxDOT also simplified its operations to five major categories:

Plan It: Includes all planning, designing, right-of-way acquisition for highways and other modes of transportation, and transportation research that saves lives and money

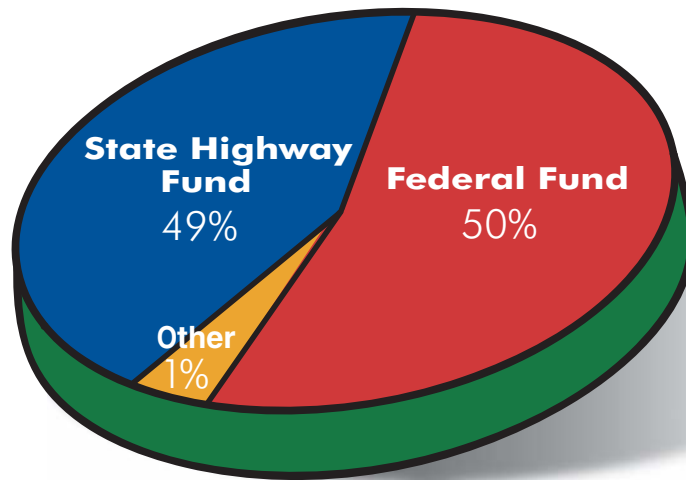
Build It: Includes highway and bridge construction and airport improvements

Use It: Includes public transportation, vehicle titles and registration, vehicle dealer registration, motor carrier registration, traffic safety, travel information, and auto theft prevention

Maintain It: Includes roadways, bridges, airports, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and ferry systems

Manage It: Includes central and regional administration, information resources, financial matters, and other support services

Where the money comes from



Federal Fund = 50 %

- Highway: 97%
- Aviation: 1%
- Traffic Safety: 1%
- Transit: 1.2 %

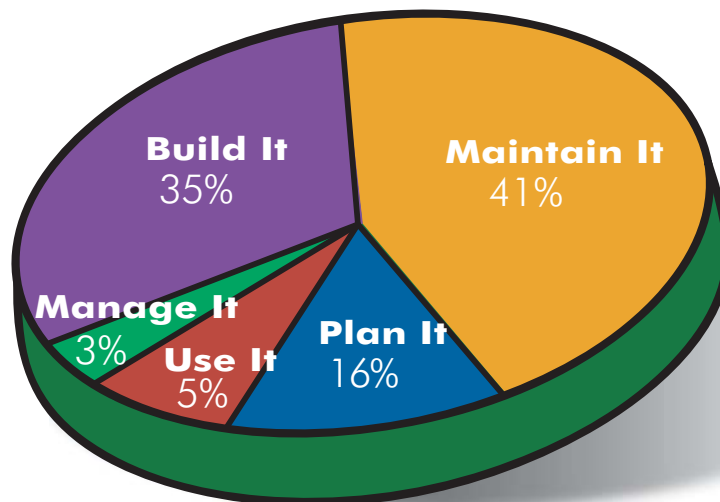
State Highway Fund = 49%

- Motor Fuels Tax: 66%
- Vehicle Registration Fees: 26%
- Other: 8%

Other = 1 %

- General Revenue: 1%
- Other: 99%

Where the money goes



Ultimately, everything that TxDOT does has to do with improving safety. From roadside work zones to the transport of hazardous materials to highway lanes that restrict commercial trucks, nothing is more important at TxDOT than the safety of the millions of people using the system each day.

Safer roads

TxDOT can now borrow money against future revenue — up to \$3 billion to accelerate highway projects, reduce traffic congestion and improve safety thanks to a constitutional amendment voters approved in 2003. State Highway Fund revenue bonds also require that 20 percent or \$600 million of the funds generated be used to target safety problems on Texas roads. The bonds, though not a source of new revenue, provide the means to get access to transportation funds sooner. That means TxDOT can accelerate transportation improvements by issuing bonds that are paid back with future revenues. In December, the commission approved projects proposed by the agency's 25 districts. Projects will focus on:

- Increasing pavement width of existing highways less than 24 feet
- Installing left-turn lanes
- Installing median barriers
- Constructing highway grade separations

Work-zone safety

TxDOT launched its first work zone safety public awareness campaign in 2004, using public service announcements urging motorists to exercise caution and heed warning signs in construction areas. The department works continually to assure the safety of workers and motorists. TxDOT uses added safety features such as plastic construction barrels, signs and barricades, which are designed to reduce both vehicle damage and driver injury when hit by a vehicle. These safety efforts also protect drivers from dangers such as steep drop-offs and construction equipment. Work-zone fatalities in 2003 decreased to 161, down from 197 in the previous year.



This message appeared on billboards in Texas to encourage safety belt use among pickup drivers.

Buckle up in your truck

TxDOT teamed with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to focus its Click It or Ticket campaign on safety belt use among pickup drivers, whose seat belt use has traditionally lagged 6 percentage points below that of other drivers. The campaign included television, radio and billboard advertisements. Post-campaign surveys show that safety belt use among pickup drivers increased 4.2 percentage points to 85.3 percent. The campaign runs through 2005. Nationwide, each percentage point increase in safety belt use represents 2.8 million more people buckling up, 265 more lives saved and 6,400 serious injuries prevented annually, according to NHTSA.



Employee spotlight

Eddie Sleeper, office manager, Hamilton maintenance section, and his wife and four children, have for the last 15 years opened their home to foster children — up to seven kids at once, ranging in age from 3 to 20, and each with different physical, emotional and psychological needs.

Off the job, Eddie and his wife coordinate medical appointments, therapy and counseling, school, after-school activities, sports and social events, not to mention daily meals, baths, playtime, story time and bedtime.

Babies safely on board

TxDOT's efforts helped distribute 13,500 child safety seats to low-income families along with more than 400,000 pieces of educational literature. The department also conducted numerous clinics on the proper use of the seats throughout Texas in 2004. In partnership with the Texas Department of Health, TxDOT works to educate parents about the importance of buckling their children into safety seats and the seats' proper installation in vehicles.

Highway safety

In 2004, the annual Texas Highway Safety Plan, which seeks to improve safety through public information and education, enforcement and engineering, approved 237 projects totaling \$46.6 million in federal, state and local funds. The safety projects ranged from \$300 contributions in seed money to help high schools celebrate alcohol-free graduation and prom seasons to the statewide Click It or Ticket campaign that has helped Texas increase safety belt use to an historic high in only three years.

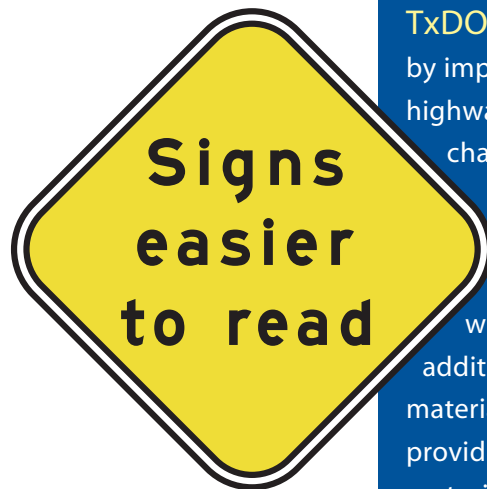
Research nets return on investment

TxDOT leverages its research funds through its cooperative program with Texas' state-supported universities to develop products and procedures that can be readily incorporated into TxDOT operations to improve highway planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance. Through the ideas or products resulting from this research, the department can expect to see some 245 lives saved and 25,000 crashes prevented, and savings of about \$350 million. Among this year's key innovations:

- An advanced warning system that alerts approaching drivers that the green light is about to go to red, which has resulted in a 40 percent reduction in red-light running
- Temperature and moisture sensors inserted into concrete pavement during construction, which allow engineers to place the concrete under the optimum conditions to ensure long-term durability of the road
- Improved edge-repair training to reduce naturally occurring yet hazardous drop-offs from the roadway, which is expected to prevent 320 vehicle accidents and at least 10 fatalities a year

Restricted driving lanes

As part of TxDOT's continuing push to make roads safer for all Texans and visitors, the commission authorized the creation of a left-lane restriction for commercial trucks on segments of I-35 in Central Texas with at least three lanes. City and county officials requested the restriction, which resulted from legislation allowing counties to be involved in determining truck lanes. Currently, commercial trucks are restricted from driving in the far left lane on portions of roads in Bexar, Harris, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties, with El Paso and the Fort Worth area considering similar restrictions. A pilot project on restricted driving lanes saw a 68 percent reduction in the number of crashes.



TxDOT has improved safety by improving the look of its highway signs. The department changed the fonts, increased the letter height for some signs and changed the materials used on other signs to help with legibility and visibility. In addition, brighter, fluorescent materials on warning signs also will provide increased visibility for motorists in low-light conditions.

Bolstering border safety

TxDOT moved forward in 2004 on building border safety-inspection stations at the World Trade and Colombia Solidarity international bridges in Laredo, two of the busiest commercial crossings in Texas. Border inspection stations allow for state and federal inspections immediately at the port of entry so that commercial trucks crossing from Mexico do not evade inspections. Eight border safety-inspection facilities are planned along the Texas-Mexico border to promote safe commerce.

Railroad crossing safety improvements

In its continuing effort to improve safety at railroad crossings, TxDOT in 2004 allocated more than \$25 million under the Federal Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Signal Program to install warning lights and gates at 148 public railroad grade crossings. Under this program, TxDOT identifies railroad grade crossings needing safety improvements. Over the past 20 years, auto-train collisions have dropped by 68 percent in Texas, from 890 to 282, in part due to the safety improvements implemented under this program.

Employee spotlight

Barbara Peck, administrative assistant, Vehicle Titles and Registration Division, Austin, spends about 30 hours a week working with the Animal Trustees of Austin to find homes for foster dogs and cats. She brings many of the animals into her own home until permanent homes can be found. She also serves on the organization's board of directors, helps with the newsletter and fundraisers, maintains the database and Web site, and conducts outreach and education programs on behalf of the animals.



TxDOT spends more of its budget on maintenance than any other category. As a matter of fact:

- TxDOT allocates more than 50 percent of its highway program funding to preserve existing roadways
- 46 percent of TxDOT's employees are involved in maintenance work
- It would cost more than \$50 billion to replace Texas' roads and bridges if preventive maintenance were not performed on them

Protecting Texans' investment

Many Texas roads have passed their prime. They need expensive maintenance so motorists can continue to get where they need to go safely. At the same time, population growth, increased miles driven, and expanded freight hauling along Texas highways demand development of new transportation corridors to accommodate this growth. Mindful of this, the commission in May approved nearly \$9 billion to preserve the existing system. The four-year plan, scheduled for 2005 implementation, distributes \$7.5 billion for highways, \$1 billion for bridge replacement and rehabilitation, \$377 million for grade separations at highway-rail intersections, and \$5.5 million for rail.

The commission in 2004 outsourced the total maintenance, operation, repair and enhancement of rest areas across the state, using performance-based contracting.



Employee spotlight

Eddie Munoz, maintenance section supervisor, Fort Stockton, serves as the city's mayor pro tem and as a member of the city council.

Rapid response

From floods to fires, and various manmade disasters in between, Texas roads, bridges, signs and equipment get battered and sometimes broken. But they do not stay that way. In 2004, the infrastructure that literally holds up the state's transportation system experienced some serious hits. Through their actions, TxDOT employees quickly got these structures up and running, keeping disasters from becoming catastrophes and temporary inconvenience from turning into long-term hassles for Texas drivers.

- On a fall morning along SH 30, the malfunctioning scooper portion of a garbage truck slammed into the SH 6 bridge overpass in Bryan. The impact knocked out two support beams and closed three of SH 30's five lanes, and one lane on SH 6. But that night, TxDOT repair crews had opened all lanes. Within two weeks, all repairs had been completed.
- Along I-20 west of Kilgore, a 39-ton steel girder broke loose from a tractor-trailer rig and smashed into two bridge columns, closing the freeway to westbound traffic. Only two days later, temporary supports installed under the bridge allowed one lane of the roadway to be reopened to westbound traffic. Within six weeks, TxDOT crews had completed all the repairs so that both westbound lanes opened with minimal impact to motorists.



Before: Bridge on I-20 near Pecos washed into Salt Draw during last spring's torrential rainstorms.



After: The I-20 bridge repaired two months after it collapsed into Salt Draw.

- A spring storm in Reeves County, between Pecos and Toyah, dumped eight inches of rain into the watershed of Salt Draw. The normally dry draw quickly became a torrent, and the rush of water caused 80 feet of bridge roadway on I-20 to crumble and fall into the fast-moving water below. Within two weeks, TxDOT and its contractor had opened westbound traffic on the bridge; restoration of the eastbound portion of the bridge was completed within two months.

Improving Texas airports

TxDOT provided more than \$63 million in grants to local governments for improvements at 124 publicly owned general aviation and reliever airports in 2004. The grants enhanced safety at these airports through the installation of lighting and weather observation systems, major pavement improvements and runway extensions, and the construction or remodeling of terminal buildings and control towers.

The numbers say it all:

- Texans drive more than 218 billion miles a year — equal to 450,333 round trips from Earth to the Moon — on state highways, up more than 100 percent in the last 20 years
- 83 percent of newcomers to Texas locate in already-congested urban areas
- Vehicles registered in Texas increased 61 percent from 13.4 million to 18.4 million in the last 20 years
- Texas road capacity has increased by only 7.6 percent in the last 20 years

The growing demand facing the state's overburdened state highway system threatens safety, the environment, productivity, economic vitality and quality of life.

So something's got to give

Traditional funding sources — based on the motor fuels tax, state vehicle-registration fees and federal reimbursements — can't keep pace with the transportation needs of Texas. A new strategy developed and established by Gov. Rick Perry, the Texas Legislature and the commission will allow Texas to better meet the emerging economic, population and financial realities of the 21st century. The strategy recognizes that regional transportation solutions can best be developed at the local level. This blueprint accelerates transportation improvements by funding new capacity through toll revenue and public-private partnerships. And it includes modes of transportation other than automobiles, such as commuter and freight rail and public transit.

The commission, at the direction of Texas legislators and Gov. Perry, is encouraging local communities to consider tolling when feasible to build transportation improvements faster. That way, project completion is accelerated — by years in many cases — and tolls can generate or leverage additional funds to build new projects and to maintain existing roads. Texas cannot meet its future transportation needs if the state continues to deliver improvements at the same pace it always has. Acceleration of projects through leveraging of resources represents the new formula for congestion relief in Texas.

Mobility funds

The commission in 2004 established the framework for issuing up to \$3 billion in bonds secured by the Texas Mobility Fund. The money in the fund, generated from traffic fines and transportation-related fees, will pay off the bonds. This new source of transportation funding will speed up needed mobility projects throughout the state. By approving the legislatively mandated strategic plan for the fund, the commission paved the way for allocating the bond proceeds statewide to finance the construction of and improvements to state highways, publicly owned toll roads, and other public transportation projects (such as transit, light rail or commuter rail projects).

Eligible projects must:

- reduce congestion, improve safety, expand economic opportunity, or enhance statewide connectivity
- include rail, public transportation and other options
- be planned and supported locally
- leverage other sources of money such as tolls

The next step: metro mobility needs identified

The commission concurred with the Metropolitan Mobility Plan that transportation leaders in the state's eight metropolitan areas created to leverage the Texas Mobility Fund. Requested by Gov. Perry in March 2003, the Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan summarizes how each of the state's metropolitan areas intends to take advantage of innovative financing tools provided by the legislature. Putting the plan into action will accelerate mobility improvements and add \$12 billion to the anticipated \$68 billion in funding available for the next 25 years to reduce urban traffic congestion. The result: construction of 88 percent of the mobility projects planned for the next 12 years in the state's eight largest metropolitan areas can begin in half the time.

Local control, regional solutions

The commission approved the fifth regional mobility authority (RMA) in Smith/Gregg counties along with two other RMAs in Grayson and Cameron counties. The new RMAs join Bexar and Travis/Williamson counties among the areas in Texas with the means to set their own transportation priorities, enter into contracts that allow for concurrent design and construction, and issue bonds. Once approved by the commission, RMAs can build, operate and maintain toll roads and various other transportation projects. They can also levy tolls to pay for new transportation projects.

First pass-through toll negotiations

The commission gave the department the go-ahead to begin negotiations with Montgomery County, the city of Weatherford and Grayson County on how they will use pass-through tolls to accelerate needed transportation projects. The commission action represents the first steps in forming pass-through toll agreements, a key element of HB 3588, which gives local officials more options to accelerate transportation improvements. Using pass-through tolls, local communities fund their projects, and TxDOT reimburses them for all or a portion of the project based on how many vehicles drive on that roadway or use that form of transportation. Motorists do not pay tolls. Rather, the local community pays for the project initially, and receives repayment from TxDOT.

Trans-Texas Corridor the way to go

The Trans-Texas Corridor, Gov. Perry's vision of a statewide network of transportation routes connecting destinations within and outside Texas, will revolutionize mobility in Texas. This multi-modal transportation system will feature separate lanes for trucks and passenger vehicles, high-speed passenger rail, commuter and freight rail, and public utility lines (for water, electricity, natural gas, petroleum, fiber-optic cables and telecommunication lines). When feasible, the Trans-Texas Corridor will incorporate existing and new highways, railways and utility rights of way.



As envisioned, the Trans-Texas Corridor will include separate lanes for passenger vehicles and trucks, freight railways, highway-speed commuter railways and space for various utility lines. The roads, rail and utilities will be phased in as demand warrants and private sector funding makes it feasible. Depending on environmental and engineering factors, roads, rail and utilities may not be located adjacent to each other as shown in the illustration.

Public outreach

More than 3,300 interested Texans attended Trans-Texas Corridor hearings in all 254 Texas counties in 2004. They gathered not only to voice their views on the Trans-Texas Corridor, but also to hear from transportation officials on what the plan entails and where its routes might be located. Many participants expressed support for the Trans-Texas Corridor concept, while others voiced concerns or sought more detailed information on project costs, funding, route locations and economic impacts. The top three transportation concerns among attendees: traffic congestion, driver safety, and economic growth. The three top route choices among citizens:

- A route paralleling I-35 from the Oklahoma border to the Mexico border (59%)
- A route paralleling I-10 from El Paso to the Louisiana border (29%)
- A route paralleling I-45 from Houston to the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex (28%)

TxDOT also conducted 70 meetings to solicit public input on the Oklahoma-Mexico/Gulf Coast element of the Trans-Texas Corridor as part of an ongoing environmental study. The study will be completed in late 2005.

Moving the Trans-Texas Corridor forward

The Trans-Texas Corridor qualified for a special experimental project agreement, allowing federal funds to be used in the project planning while the environmental analysis is conducted. The federal government partnered with Texas so that planning and development of the Trans-Texas Corridor can occur through an innovative contracting agreement unveiled in March by the nation's top highway official, Mary Peters, administrator for the Federal Highway Administration.

Trans-Texas Corridor-35 contractor chosen

The commission in December voted to select Cintra-Zachry as the state's first private-sector firm on the Trans-Texas Corridor. The international consortium, made up of engineering, construction and financial firms, will develop the Oklahoma-to-Mexico portion of the Trans-Texas Corridor (TTC-35). Cintra-Zachry proposed investing \$6 billion in a toll road between Dallas and San Antonio by 2010, giving the state \$1.2 billion for additional transportation improvements between Oklahoma and Mexico, and extending the corridor into the Lower Rio Grande Valley to Mexico. In return for building the new transportation corridor and giving it to the state, Cintra-Zachry proposed a 50-year contract to maintain and operate the new highway as a toll road.

Future projects envisioned by Cintra-Zachry include separate lanes for cars and trucks on SH 130, a relief route around the west side of Fort Worth, a TTC-35 route from San Antonio to the Rio Grande Valley, and rail between Dallas and San Antonio.

Seamless toll travel

TxDOT is working on a seamless toll tag system that will operate statewide on toll roads as well as in parking lots and eventually some stores, restaurants and gas stations. Drivers won't have to stop at toll booths to pay. By attaching a toll tag to the windshield of their vehicle, tolls can be automatically collected without the motorist having to slow down. TxDOT has already coordinated with the North Texas Tollway Authority and the Harris County Toll Road Authority so that the systems match. Similar arrangements will be made with other transportation agencies statewide as TxDOT develops toll roads. The result: the traveling public can use the same toll tag at any participating toll facility in the state. Testing on the toll tag TxDOT will issue to its toll road users is under way.

Serving new customers

TxDOT successfully assumed the operations of the Medical Transportation Program formerly handled by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services. The transfer is the result of legislation passed in 2003 to eliminate overlapping services, reduce costs and increase efficiencies. In 2004, the TxDOT program arranged transportation for more than 130,000 people, providing some 3.5 million one-way trips. The program transports eligible Medicaid and Children with Special Health Care Needs recipients to their appointments. The transfer of duties to TxDOT is reshaping how transportation services are delivered. Instead of a maze of organizations and services providing transportation, TxDOT is helping deliver public transportation with less red tape and more efficiency.

To further encourage efficient public transportation, the commission adopted rules to consider performance when allocating state funding for rural and small urban transit providers. New funding formulas — based 80 percent on need and 20 percent on performance — will be used to allocate nearly \$42 million to rural and small urban transit providers statewide in 2005.

Ten-year construction plan approved

The commission in November approved the Statewide Mobility Plan, a \$21.5 billion plan for funding highway, aviation and public transportation projects in Texas for the next 10 years. The Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan, which gives local officials in the state's largest cities more control in the fight to reduce traffic congestion, is a key part of the program.

Rail relocation studies

The department in 2004 began studying the possibility of relocating freight rail away from metropolitan areas to make way for commuter rail and to improve urban safety. At the same time, TxDOT continued working with regional transportation planners on development of a commuter rail system between Austin and San Antonio.

The department also began negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad in 2004 for the formation of a public-private partnership to re-route many freight trains out of the I-35 urban corridor in Central Texas. The proposed project would improve safety and mobility within the region while allowing the rail line to move freight through the area faster.

Employee spotlight

Levita Joyner, office manager, Perryton, has donated two bicycles to the town library's summer reading program for the past six years. She pays for the bikes and donates them in TxDOT's name as prizes to kids who participate in the program.



All eyes on Texas

In 2004, TxDOT received 114 visitors from Japan, Mexico, Spain, Australia, China, Ukraine, Jordan and Korea, who were interested in learning how the department works. Visitors ranged from engineers seeking advanced technical know-how to members of parliament learning about state government operations.

Other meetings that brought the world to Texas, or vice versa:

- TxDOT sponsored 15 information exchange events with Mexican border states' transportation officials.
- Joint Working Committee for Binational Transportation Planning meetings to enhance border and transportation planning.
- Border Governor's Conference, which included transportation officials from both sides of the border discussing their mutual interests.
- U.S.- Mexico Binational Bridges and Border Crossings Group, made up of Mexican and U.S. federal and state officials involved with bridges and border crossings. The purpose: Assure a smoother approval process of projects involving both governments.

In addition, Texas leadership in developing its safety rest areas was acknowledged through TxDOT's hosting of the bi-annual National Safety Rest Area Conference, in San Antonio. Ninety-six people from 26 states attended the three-day conference.

The Amarillo District hosted the 2004 Five State Snow Conference where 200 leaders from Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas discussed and reviewed the latest trends and technologies in equipment and strategies to minimize problems during storms.

LINC: Mentoring small businesses

More than 150 small businesses participated in the TxDOT Learning, Information, Networking and Collaboration (LINC) program designed to provide businesses with information and technical help in an effort to increase the number of small and minority vendors bidding and performing on TxDOT contracts. TxDOT contractors and staff participate in the three-year old program as mentors. In 2004, \$15 million in contracts were awarded to first-time recipients.

Colonia improvements

The commission in December approved \$50 million in projects to improve roads in colonias near the Texas-Mexico border. Basic infrastructure is lacking in many of these areas, restricting residents' ability to get in and out, to attend school, commute to jobs and respond to emergencies. TxDOT will oversee the expenditure of the funds that will pave dirt roads, connect them to other public roads, and add curbs, gutters and sidewalks where none existed. In 2001, Texas voters approved a \$175 million bond package to support the road improvement program. The commission approved the first \$50 million round of projects in 2002. To date, 274 projects have been funded in 21 counties.

Early start for Trinity River Parkway

President George W. Bush signed an executive order giving the Trinity River Parkway near downtown Dallas the go-ahead for a coordinated environmental review while retaining the strict environmental standards currently in place. Historically, it takes up to 65 months to clear an environmental impact statement through the federal process. Under terms of the executive order, the Trinity River project could be accelerated by two years.

Updated industry how-to manual

Through a collaborative effort with transportation industry representatives, the department updated its 1,016-page specification book. This guide compiles the latest construction specifications that guide TxDOT projects. As a new feature, the manual comes with a compact disk that can be used to conduct word searches for specific sections. The update is done only once a decade and guides every aspect of transportation design and construction.

WiFi convenience

TxDOT became the first state department of transportation in the country to offer free wireless Internet (WiFi) access at its safety rest areas and travel information centers — and at no cost to taxpayers. Initially, motorists with wireless computers traveling to seven of the state's safety rest areas and travel information centers can log on to the Internet when they are within range of those rest areas and information centers. (Travelers without computers can pay a fee to access the Internet on equipment inside select rest areas and information centers). By late 2005, all safety rest areas and travel information centers will offer wireless Internet service, giving motorists access to e-mail, Web sites and local travel information. Safety rest areas provide motorists an opportunity to stop and take a break from driving — reducing fatigue and improving safety.

Employee spotlight

Cliff Bost, photographer and assistant public information officer, Corpus Christi District, and his sister, created a special soccer program for kids with disabilities five years ago after Cliff and his wife adopted a foster child diagnosed with autism. Cliff has been a resource to legislators about issues facing families who have children with disabilities, serves as a Boy Scout and Cub Scout leader, and until recently sat on the city parks and recreation department's advisory committee.



Point-of-sale sticker printing

Vehicle registration got easier for counties — and more secure in 2004. New registration stickers, which are printed on the spot with the vehicle's identification and license plate numbers, help deter sticker misuse and eliminate the need for sticker inventory. Launched in July, the point-of-sale sticker printing program is expected to be implemented statewide by early 2005.

Faster access to road condition reports

TxDOT launched a new and improved Internet site for highway road-condition information, which lists all roads on the state highway system with closures or hazardous driving conditions. The list includes major crashes, fires, ice, snow or flooding. An interactive map allows viewers to enlarge areas of interest to view the locations of highway conditions along a road. Motorists can use this information to avoid highway conditions that delay travel or make travel unsafe. The site: <http://www.dot.state.tx.us/hcr/main.htm>

Registration at Internet speed

The new Motor Carrier Credentialing Systems (MCCS) Online program allows motor carriers and insurance companies to submit applications and insurance filings via the Internet. Motor carriers can now apply and pay for their motor carrier registration online, receive their credentials electronically, and print the required documentation at their place of business. Insurance companies can electronically file the required insurance forms on behalf of the motor carrier. This eliminates the average 10-day turnaround for processing motor carrier registration through mail delivery. Only eight months after launching the program, 44 percent of all motor carrier transactions and 65 percent of all insurance transactions have been submitted and processed online. This translates to more than 113,000 online transactions that would have been processed manually.

Benefits:

- More efficient customer service, reducing turnaround time
- Increase in compliance by motor carriers — which results in increased safety for the traveling public and protects the highway infrastructure.

Standing behind consumers

The Lemon Law, administered by TxDOT, helped nearly 1,000 new-car buyers get back approximately \$6 million in repairs or replacements on vehicles that didn't perform.

The Lemon Law covers new or leased vehicles, including cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, motor homes, towable recreational vehicles and neighborhood electric vehicles. Of cases closed in 2004, 67 percent of the consumers received some form of relief from the program. Some 29 percent had vehicles repurchased, replaced or traded by the manufacturer, and an additional 37 percent received repairs, extended service contracts or other remedies.

Every day while TxDOT employees are helping to build roads, they are also protecting the state's water, air and other natural resources. In fact, the department strives to leave every project site cleaner environmentally than it was before TxDOT arrived on the scene.

Underground cleanup

A key example is TxDOT's approach to abandoned underground storage tanks that once held petroleum products. Left behind after businesses closed, chemicals in the underground storage tanks often leaked into the soil and water. In 2004, TxDOT helped remove 50 petroleum storage tanks found in the course of preparing the right of way for construction.

Perhaps the largest such project took place in Galveston on SH 146 where TxDOT was preparing to widen the highway. The new bridge and widened roadway is a crucial Galveston Island hurricane evacuation route. However, arsenic-contaminated soils were found in the future right of way and had to be removed before the project could proceed. For 60 years, the 170-acre site where the cleanup occurred had been home to five wastewater treatment ponds, slag piles, open acid ponds and other waste disposal areas associated with a copper and tin smelter. Prior to construction, workers dug sometimes as deep as 12 feet through the right of way to remove more than 60,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil.

New habitats

TxDOT creates wetlands wherever feasible, and in 2004 added 19 acres of wetlands to the state through its efforts at conservation. Wetlands help the environment by absorbing pollutants, creating storage for storm run-off water, and offering recreation areas for fishing and boating.

Employee spotlight

Janice Jackson, assistant area engineer, Hillsboro, volunteers for her local PTA, through career fair and Engineer Week activities at local schools; visits nursing home patients; works on community awareness programs on breast cancer, HIV, domestic violence and dental hygiene. She chairs the Ebony Fashion Fair to pay for college scholarships.



Clean Driving

The 2004 Drive Clean Across Texas campaign targeted drivers ages 24 to 54 during the peak ozone months of June, July and August in the nine Texas metropolitan areas designated as near nonattainment or nonattainment for air quality. Billboards reached more than 3 million drivers, with radio spots reaching 5.5 million listeners and television 7.5 million viewers. The campaign, a joint project of TxDOT, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Federal Highway Administration, implores Texas drivers to "Maintain your vehicle," "Drive less," "Buy a cleaner vehicle," "Drive the speed limit" and "Don't idle."

TxDOT's Clean Air Plan

The department's internal effort to match the Drive Clean Across Texas campaign went into full swing in 2004. Employees, in their personal and work lives, have been asked to implement up to 30 clean air measures. A three-month pilot program resulted in the reduction of an estimated 11 tons of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compound emissions statewide. The agency's formal Clean Air Plan will be put into place in 2005.

Recycling oil

TxDOT strives to be a community leader in recycling. For instance, TxDOT's El Paso District has collected nearly 700,000 gallons of used motor oil since 1994 through its 10 oil-collection centers. The program allows do-it-yourselfers the means to properly dispose of used oil.

Clean water

To assure an environmentally sensitive replacement to a low-water crossing on the Frio River, the San Angelo District approached the construction with the goal of preserving the surrounding wildlife and clean water. Consequently, district employees proceeded with care and caution every step of the way. They used vegetable-based, biodegradable fluid in their heavy equipment to keep the water pure. Innovative design allowed most of the large cypress trees on the creek bed to remain untouched. As a result, the new crossing had minimal impact on the environment.

TxDOT workers are always ready to serve their communities, their state and their country. Going above and beyond what is expected has become the benchmark of how TxDOT employees approach their jobs. Whether at home, at work or abroad, TxDOT employees aim to serve.

TxDOT employees in the military

Since Sept. 11, 2001, TxDOT workers have been on the front lines in the war against terrorism. A total of 65 TxDOT employees have been deployed by various branches of the military in the last three years. Many have returned to resume their work here in Texas; some have shipped out more than once; and 33 employees continue to serve in the military.

Homeland security

TxDOT employees are enhancing their skills in spotting suspicious activity around the state's critical transportation infrastructure — bridges, overpasses, ferries, travel centers and traffic management centers. New training takes advantage of the access that TxDOT employees have to the entire transportation system of the state as they perform their job duties. Employees have learned how to spot potential terrorist activity and how to respond through role-playing exercises and real-world examples. The training also includes information on how to secure buildings and facilities and the different types of terrorist weapons. Mandatory for all field employees and their supervisors, the training also is offered to office workers and others who might be in a position to observe suspicious activity.

By year's end, TxDOT trained nearly two-thirds of its employees. Officials expect the presence of so many trained observers throughout the state to help prevent serious disruptions to the state's transportation system.

Employee spotlight

Pharr District employees and retirees have gotten together once a year for the past 10 years to prepare and sell 3,000 meals. The employees raise money for the Casa Amparo Orphanage for little girls in Reynosa, Mexico.



Sheltering hurricane evacuees

In the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan, the fourth to hit the U.S. Gulf Coast in the summer of 2004, residents of Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi began traveling west to escape the danger predicted for their states. They found refuge at two TxDOT travel information centers at Waskom and Orange, where doors were kept open well into the night for weary travelers. TxDOT maintenance workers in the Beaumont and Orange areas worked around the clock for two days and nights providing emergency fuel, water, and breakdown assistance at the border between Louisiana and Texas. TxDOT delayed closing roads across the state due to any pending construction so that evacuees could get out of town and to their destinations safely and rapidly. To further aid motorists' journeys, TxDOT replaced out-of-service traffic signals with human signalers to maintain order and a smoother traffic flow. In addition, TxDOT message boards warned motorists of evacuation routes to avoid, guiding them to the safest and most expedient roads.

A desktop computer is shipped directly to the consumer who bought it just hours ago on the Internet, and it gets there the next day. An office worker cuts her commute time by 20 minutes after she drives down the new toll road. A large out-of-state corporation proclaims Texas the state where it plans to locate its next expansion, thanks in large part to Texas' good roads and rail service.

Prosperity, just like the hope and well-being it spreads, comes in many forms, and reverberates throughout a community in various ways. New jobs, housing, schools and opportunities result when TxDOT does its job — day in and day out — to keep people and goods moving within and through the state.

Toyota in Texas

Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Texas broke ground in 2004 on its \$800 million, 2,000-acre pickup production factory in San Antonio, scheduled for startup in 2006. Over the construction period, some 2,000 people will be working on the site. When complete, the plant is expected to bring another 2,000 jobs to the San Antonio area, with a \$37 million annual payroll to the state. In addition, Toyota parts suppliers are expected to invest \$100 million in the state and employ about 1,000 people. Through its commitment to fund roadway improvements to accommodate the facility, TxDOT played a key role in Toyota's decision to locate in Texas.

Cabela's in Texas

Quick commission response to one corporation's interest in opening a facility on the I-35 corridor contributed to the announcement by Cabela's, the Nebraska-based sports outlet chain, that it will open two new stores in Texas. In Central Texas, the commission allocated more than \$20 million for new frontage roads and overpasses on I-35 near Buda, where a Cabela's plans to locate. Another Cabela's is slated to open in Fort Worth. Both openings are expected to bring 600 full-time and several hundred part-time jobs to Texas. Additional economic growth in surrounding areas is expected in the form of new hotels, entertainment parks, restaurants and retail stores that will produce more than \$250 million in investment and an additional 2,000 jobs.

Pulling in the visitors

- In 2004, TxDOT greeted 3.3 million visitors at 12 travel information centers.
- TxDOT also played a major role in attracting visitors through its 267,500-circulation travel magazine, *Texas Highways*.

Helping to protect America

TxDOT has been working with military commanders in Texas to assure that roads are in the kind of shape they need to be for rapid troop movement during deployments. As the federal government prepares to close more military bases around the nation in 2005, TxDOT has been playing an important role in assuring that Texas retains its remaining military bases.

Supporting U.S. military bases

Gov. Perry last summer announced that Texas will fund \$16.2 million in infrastructure improvements to support new troops who will be stationed at Fort Bliss in El Paso. Texas also will fund \$20 million for transportation improvements to accommodate expanded forces at Fort Hood in Killeen. In addition, the state has pledged more than \$13 million to the Red River Army Depot and \$5 million to the Naval Air Station at Corpus Christi for transportation infrastructure improvements in the event that the U.S. Department of Defense decides to expand operations at those sites. In all these cases, TxDOT continues its tradition of contributing to the security of the nation as well as to the state's economy. By enhancing military installations and the communities that surround them, the Texas economy retains and even gains residents. Department of Defense expenditures in Texas, which include the state's 18 military installations, total \$33 billion and bring \$77 billion worth of economic benefit to Texas.



Employee spotlight

Fu Benavidez, Donley County maintenance supervisor, Childress District, has served on his local Clarendon Volunteer Fire Department for 14 years, on call 24 hours a day. He is one of the many TxDOT employees who serves as a volunteer firefighter. He also serves on the Clarendon ISD crisis committee and presents fire prevention programs at the local elementary school.

Employees go the extra mile to save others

TxDOT's employees are a special breed, willing to lend a hand either on or off the job when they see motorists in trouble. TxDOT hears hundreds of reports of employees' courteous and courageous acts each year, and the department bestows the coveted Extra Mile Award on those who, in many cases, risked their lives to save someone else's.

Extra Mile Award recipients in 2004:

Jesse Camacho and Ray Ramos, Abilene District — For their role in rescuing a missing two-year-old boy, found safely on a ranch in Shackelford County.

Walter Luckett, Bryan District — For saving the life of a co-worker who had fallen into a collapsing hole on the embankment along FM 39 during a heavy rain in Leon County.

Sandra Williams, Dallas District — For aiding a disabled driver involved in a collision in Dallas along Interstate 30 and for alerting emergency responders.

Larry Gipson and Victor Songer, Dallas District — For aiding four men injured by a truck that crashed through work-zone barriers on Interstate 35 in Ellis County.

Hector Granado, Rolando Hernandez, Eduardo Martin, Raul Melendez, Auden Natividad and Mario Pando, El Paso District — For the rescue of a mother and child from a vehicle washed off RM 170 in Presidio County during a flood.

Art Gutierrez, El Paso District — For pulling a motorist from a burning vehicle along Interstate 10 in Hudspeth County.

Charles Neuman, Houston District — For pulling an injured driver from an overturned tandem-trailer truck that crashed on FM 363 in Waller County.

Gary Skolaut, Houston District — For pulling a trapped motorist from a vehicle overturned into a ditch of rising water during a downpour along Interstate 45 in Montgomery County.

Frank Munsinger, San Angelo District — For the rescue of a mother and child from a vehicle washed into the Frio River in Real County during a flood.

David Lozano, San Antonio District — For his role in the rescue of an unconscious motorist and his attention to traffic safety on Interstate 10 in San Antonio.

Four from TxDOT achieve Texas Transportation Institute honors

- **Greer Award** — Honors the skill, dedication, civic-mindedness, innovation and performance excellence of TxDOT engineers.
Winner: Carol T. Rawson, P.E., Traffic Operations Division
- **Gilchrist Award** — Honors the performance of an outstanding TxDOT engineer.
Winner: Clay R. Smith, P.E., San Antonio District
- **DeBerry Award** — Honors outstanding contributions to the state of Texas in the field of transportation.
Winner: Behrooz Badiozzamani, P.E., Pharr District
- **Stotzer Award** — Honors a non-engineer who displays outstanding leadership, dedication and service to the department.
Winner: Carl B. Bertrand, Construction Division

TxDOT accomplishments garner top awards

TxDOT was recognized for excellence by some of the nation's top transportation organizations in 2004. The department won numerous accolades from transportation industry officials, including the prestigious American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO) awards. Among the AASHTO awards TxDOT won:

- The Francis B. Francois Award for an innovation that increases efficiency, safety, and cost savings of using hot-mix asphalt to patch highways
- The President's Transportation Award for the Routine Airport Maintenance Program (RAMP), which provided \$1.3 million for improvements to 111 general aviation airports
- The President's Transportation Award for the department's contribution to reducing teenage drinking and driving crashes
- The President's Transportation Award for improving the way that pavement ride quality is measured
- The President's Transportation Award for service improvements at the Port Aransas Ferry System

TxDOT wins three National Partnership for Highway Quality awards

- the Gold Award for innovations that increase the safety of applying hot-mix to the roadway
- the Silver Award for Partnering with local officials on the I-10 Katy Freeway
- the Silver Award for the Learning Information, Networking and Collaboration (LINC) program, which helps small-business owners increase their business opportunities with TxDOT

218.2 billion Vehicle miles traveled, all systems	39,410 Registered motor carriers, total**
\$13.5 billion Value of TxDOT projects under contract	16,199 State highways, centerline miles
\$6.8 billion Annual TxDOT budget	14,812 Total TxDOT employees
\$2.5 billion Taxes collected from motor vehicle sales	12,102 U.S. highways, centerline miles
\$1.3 billion Registration fees collected on motor vehicles	7,639 Miles adopted by 3,577 Adopt-a-Highway volunteer groups
\$166.6 million Fees collected for 5.8 million vehicle titles	6,677 Frontage roads, centerline miles
18.4 million Motor vehicles registered in Texas	3,233 Interstate highways, centerline miles
3.3 million Cubic yards of asphalt reclaimed through recycling	743 Picnic areas
3.3 million Customers assisted at 12 travel information centers	339 Park roads, centerline miles
302,028 Total miles of streets, roads, highways	300 Airports in Texas Airport system
267,500 Texas Highway magazine circulation	157 Toll roads, centerline miles
79,535 State maintained centerline miles*	101 Safety rest areas
48,920 Bridges, total	32 Auto theft prevention grants awarded
40,985 Farm-to-market roads, centerline miles	1 Texas

Figures as of February 2005.

* A centerline mile is the distance between Point A and Point B on a road, regardless of the number of lanes. A lane mile measures the total length of all lanes between points A and B.

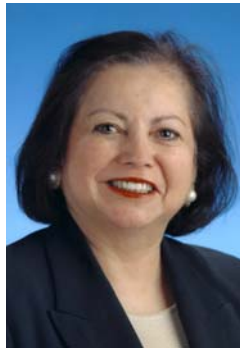
** A motor carrier is a commercial motor vehicle that transports people or cargo over a road or highway.

The Texas Department of Transportation is governed by the Texas Transportation Commission and an executive director selected by the commission. The commission oversees transportation planning and implementation and provides a forum, through its monthly meetings, for public participation in decisions affecting transportation in Texas. The five commissioners serve overlapping six-year terms, and are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Texas Senate. The governor designates the commission's chair.

Texas Transportation Commission



Ric Williamson
Chair



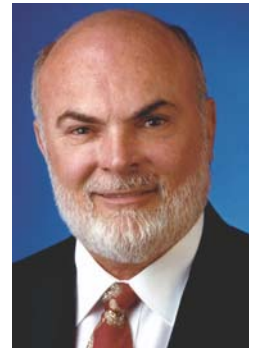
Hope Andrade
Commissioner



Ted Houghton
Commissioner



John W. Johnson
Commissioner



Robert L. Nichols
Commissioner

TxDOT is divided into 25 district offices, headed by district engineers, and 27 divisions or offices that support those districts.

Looking Ahead

TxDOT has embarked on its third revolution since it was established 87 years ago. The department's original purpose in 1917 centered on pulling the farmer out of the mud and getting him onto paved roads to take his goods to market. The second big shift in direction came with the move in the 1950s to build the interstate highway system, which took this state from a rural to a metropolitan society — and linked it to the rest of the country.

Our third revolution, and the one we find ourselves in the midst of today, is a fundamental change that will help move us forward to better meet the demands of the 21st century. Unlike past years, this new direction involves establishing priorities at the regional level, funding new transportation projects through tolls, and defining transportation solutions to include modes other than automobiles.

We have many new tools to help deliver the best, smartest and safest transportation system to our fellow Texans. We can continue to make progress with the participation, cooperation and vision of communities whose concerns stretch beyond — but also include — their own city limits. As One Texas, we can accomplish all of our goals and carry out the demands of this third transportation revolution.



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